



Social Media for Public Safety

What does VOST do?



Our past

- The concept of VOST was created in the United States in 2011, by Scott Reuter and Jeff Phillips , and then **Virtual Operations Support Groups** were born in first in the USA, and soon extended to Canada, Australia and New Zealand.
- **VOST Spain** was born in 2012
- **VISOV** (the French VOST) was born in 2013
- **VOST Europe** was founded in 2015, in a joint effort by VOST Spain + VISOV and soon after became a member of the global VOST alliance, the VOSG coalition.
- **VOST Germany** was launched and became part of THW in 2017
- **VOST Portugal** was born in 2018
- **VOST Slovakia** was born in 2020
- As of 2020, VOST were mainly active in European and Central + South American countries.
- VOSTEU is a federation of VOST across Europe. The aim of this federation is to create a space to interexchange experiences, best practices, mitigate common problems with common solutions, as well as to search for opportunities as representatives of a large number of digital volunteers.
- For the 2020 – 2024 period VOST Portugal assumed the leadership of VOST EUROPE.



Out present (European focus) – 1/2

- **Different operation models:**

- National organization federating regional organizations -> **VOST Spain model (with 14 regional organizations)**
- National organization operating through agreements with regional and local public safety organizations -> **VISOV model**
- National organization operating under the umbrella of a national public safety organization -> **VOST Germany model (part of THW, under the Federal Ministry of the Interior)**
- National organization operating independently -> **VOST Portugal model (working closely with ANPC and others)**



Out present (European focus) – 1/2

- **Participation in European initiatives and projects:**
 - As members of project advisory boards and activities: **PPRD South III** project, **ENGAGE** project, **SAFER** project, **LINKS** project...
 - As providers of opensource tech: **MEDEA** project -> "**CONFIRM**" platform developed by VOST Portugal (later used by Slovakian Government to manage influx of refugees from Ukraine).
 - Through the **JRC** of the European Commission we were selected, together with VOST Portugal and VOST Spain, for implementing social media in activities related with EFAS.
 - Jorge Gomes from VOST Europe & VOST Portugal was involved in writing the **Code of Practice on Disinformation** led by the European Commission.
- **Other international cooperation activities:**
 - International cooperation due to **Hurricane Dorian in September 2019**, with VOST Americas and the CEDR Digital Corps (US based volunteer organization)



Our future

- Keep collaborating with local authorities, both formally (i.e. for Euro 2024) and informally
- Keep participating in international projects and initiatives
- New VOST may soon be active in southern mediterranean countries (i.e Lebanon, Algeria or Palestine) and Greece.

Upcoming webinar (7/9):

SRC
Societal Resilience Cluster
Disaster Resilience for Communities

Hosted by:
LINKS
Strengthening links between technologies and society
for European disaster resilience

Webinar:
"Integration of Social Media Information with Legacy Platforms"

Date:
September 7, 2023
16.30 - 17.30 CEST

Moderator

Kees Boersma
Full Professor,
Faculty of Social Sciences, Organization Sciences
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Speakers

Valerio Lorini
Scientific Researcher,
European Commission
Joint Research Centre

Chiara Proietti
External Consultant,
European Commission
Joint Research Centre

Jorge Gomes
Chief Operations Manager,
VOST Europe
National Coordinator, VOST Portugal



Contact

hello@vosteurope.org (email)

<https://vosteurope.org/> (website)

<https://twitter.com/VOSTeurope>

<https://www.facebook.com/vosteurope/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/vost-europe>